STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 196

26p

SKARR

WARRIOR OF THE NORLANDS

ALSO ON SALE THIS MONTH . . .

MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS STARBLAZER! ORDER YOUR COPY BY HANDING THIS COUPON INTO YOUR NEWSAGENT . . .

PLEASE RESERVE BOTH STARBLAZERS FOR ME.

NAME _

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Please make sure this coupon is signed by a parent or guardian.
TO THE NEWSAGENT — Both STARBLAZERS are on sale the last TUESDAY of each month.

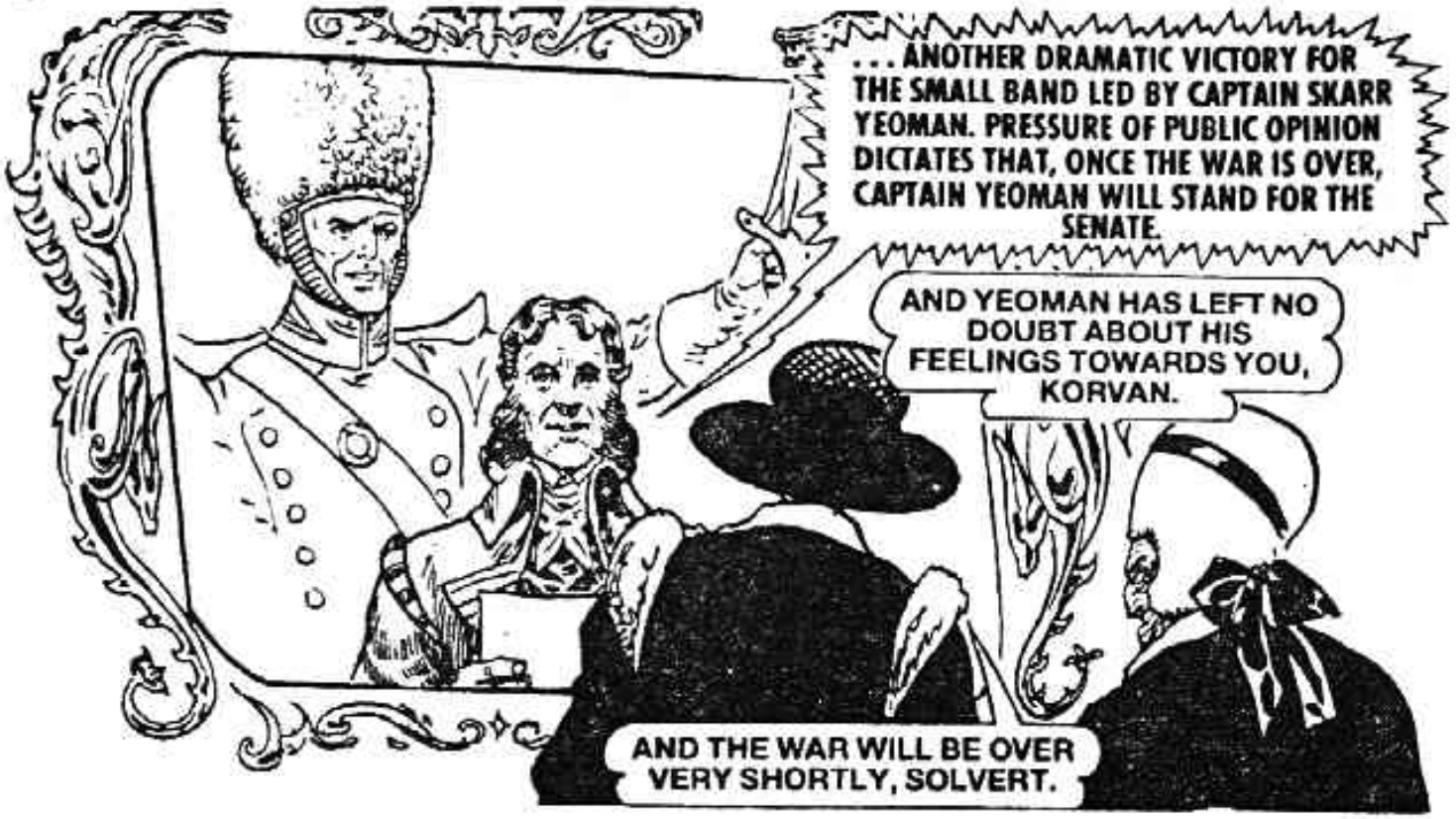
If you do not wish to cut up your STARBLAZER, copy out the above coupon on a piece of paper and hand it to your newsagent.

SKARR WARRIOR OF THE NORLANDS

SKARR YEOMAN, WHO HAD ORGANISED THE DIVERSION, LEAD HIS MEN FROM CONCEALMENT.
FORWARD! OUR LITTLE RUSE HAS WORKED!

WITH ALL OUR MODERN TECHNOLOGY, SKARR, YOU BEAT THEM WITH A HERD OF CATTLE! YOU COME UP WITH SOME VERY UNORTHODOX METHODS!
SURPRISE IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT, LIEUTENANT!

THE ACTION WAS SOON OVER —
WE'VE WIPED THEM OUT!
YES . . . HAVEN'T WE . . . I'M NOT SURE WHERE THAT FOOL WAR MINISTER KORVAN IS TAKING US . . .
AND THAT'S ALL HE IS, SKARR — WAR MINISTER — NOT PRESIDENT. HE DOESN'T HAVE THE LAST WORD!
FAR AWAY, IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE'S H.Q. IN THE CORRIDORS OF THE SENATE BUILDING . . .
THE TIME IS ALMOST RIPE FOR THE TAKE-OVER, SOLVERT. IT WILL BE A SIMPLE ENOUGH JOB. OUR PRESIDENT IS OLD, AND EASILY INFLUENCED.
INDEED, KORVAN!


. . . ANOTHER DRAMATIC VICTORY FOR THE SMALL BAND LED BY CAPTAIN SKARR YEOMAN. PRESSURE OF PUBLIC OPINION DICTATES THAT, ONCE THE WAR IS OVER, CAPTAIN YEOMAN WILL STAND FOR THE SENATE.
AND YEOMAN HAS LEFT NO DOUBT ABOUT HIS FEELINGS TOWARDS YOU, KORVAN.
AND THE WAR WILL BE OVER VERY SHORTLY, SOLVERT.

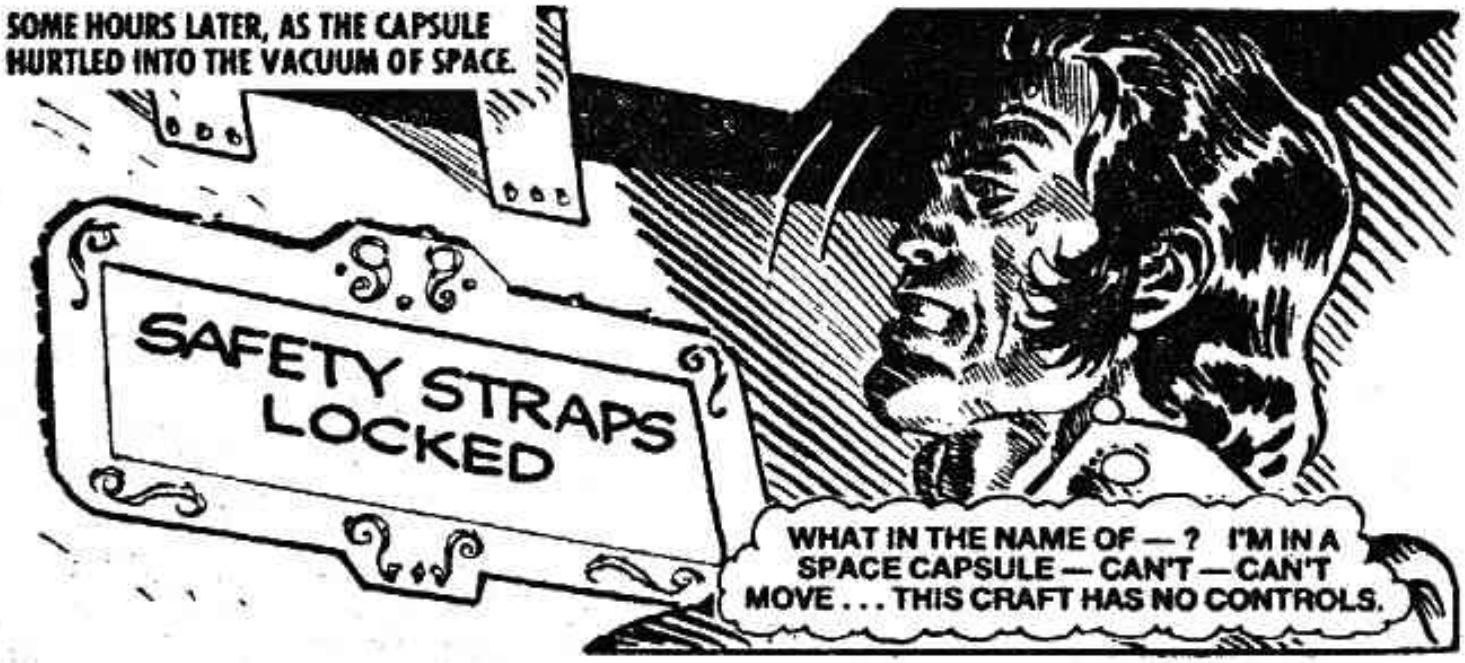
HE'LL HAVE TO GO.
DON'T BE A FOOL, KORVAN! YOU CAN'T KILL A PUBLIC HERO. THERE'LL BE UPROAR — INVESTIGATIONS, ENQUIRIES —

HE'LL DIE A HERO'S DEATH, SOLVERT. HE'LL BE MOURNED, OF COURSE, BUT THERE WON'T BE ANY ENQUIRIES. LISTEN CAREFULLY. THIS IS WHAT I HAVE IN MIND . . .

SOME DAYS LATER, SKARR RETURNED TO THE CAPITAL —
A GOVERNMENT VEHICLE! WHAT'S IT DOING HERE TO MEET US?
PROBABLY BRINGING YOU ANOTHER SHINY BIG MEDAL, SKARR. BETTER TUCK YOUR SHIRT IN . . .
CAPTAIN SKARR, TOP CLASSIFICATION. VERY SPECIAL MISSION.
DO I HAVE KORVAN'S PERMISSION TO CLEAN UP FIRST?
WHY BOTHER, SKARR? YOU'LL JUST GET YOURSELF ALL DIRTY AGAIN FROM THE SOUND OF IT.

SKARR WAS IMMEDIATELY TAKEN TO THE SPECIAL GOVERNMENT VEHICLE —
HEY! WHAT THE — COUGH!
SLEEP WELL, SKARR! IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG AND WEARISOME JOURNEY.
THE JOURNEY ENDED AT A SPACEPORT.
WELL DONE! NOW GET HIM UP INTO THE CAPSULE — HURRY. WE DON'T WANT HIM COMING ROUND TOO SOON.
IN THE CONTROL-ROOM —
SEE, SOLVERT? I'M NOT HARMING A HAIR ON HIS HEROIC HEAD. WHEN SKARR COMES TO, HE'LL BE IN ORBIT . . . FOR A VERY, VERY LONG TIME.
ON A SPECIAL SECRET MISSION FROM WHICH HE WILL NEVER RETURN. FULL MARKS, KORVAN. A NEAT FORM OF ASSASSINATION!

SOON —
WELL, KORVAN. WITH SKARR OUT OF YOUR HAIR, THE ENTIRE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE WILL BE YOURS!
IT'LL TAKE A LITTLE TIME, SOLVERT. BUT I'M IN NO HURRY AND I'LL CERTAINLY NOT BE SATISFIED WITH JUST HALF A PLANET . . .


SOME HOURS LATER, AS THE CAPSULE HURTLED INTO THE VACUUM OF SPACE.
SAFETY STRAPS LOCKED
WHAT IN THE NAME OF — ? I'M IN A SPACE CAPSULE — CAN'T — CAN'T MOVE . . . THIS CRAFT HAS NO CONTROLS.

THAT NIGHT, ON NORTHERN HEMISPHERE NEWS —
ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL SOURCES, CAPTAIN SKARR YEOMAN WAS ON A SPECIAL MISSION. HIS CRAFT WENT OUT OF CONTROL AND SELF-DESTRUCTED. CAPTAIN YEOMAN DIED AS HE HAD LIVED . . . A HERO. HE WAS BORN . . .
HIS CRAFT HASN'T SELF-DESTRUCTED YET — BUT IT WILL. I SUFFERED HIS INSOLENCE AND HIS INSULTS TOO LONG . . . I WANT THE PLEASURE OF KILLING HIM.
AND SOON, MY DEAR SOLVERT, I SHALL MOUNT AN ATTACK ON THAT BARBARIC CIVILISATION THAT OCCUPIES OUR SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE . . . THE KAMARDANS AND THE DEWENES . . .

THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE HAD DEVELOPED INDEPENDENTLY OF THE NORTH, BUT ALONG SIMILAR LINES. RELIGIOUS CEREMONIALS AND RITES PLAYED A HUGE PART IN THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE, SUCH AS WHEN THE KING OF KAMARDAN WAS SENT TO HIS LAST RESTING PLACE.
LET THE FLAMES ROAR! OUR KING PREBEN SHALL BE CARRIED BY FIRE INTO THE HEAVENS. HE SHALL BE CONSUMED IN THE PURIFYING INFERNO AND LIVE FOR ETERNITY AMONG THE GODS!
THE FUNERAL SERVICE WAS CONDUCTED BY COUNCILLOR TREVESK AND WITNESSED BY PRINCE ERIK AND HIS SISTER.

THE HIGH-PRIESTS INITIATED THE LAUNCH . . .
THE CRAFT CLIMBED TOWARDS THE HEAVENS —
A SAD, BUT PROUD MOMENT, ERIK, SON OF PREBEN. YOU ARE NOW KING OF THE KAMARDANS AND MUST SEEK VENGEANCE FOR YOUR FATHER'S DEATH.
BUT — WHO MURDERED HIM — AND WHY?

WHO OTHER THAN FORGIR, KING OF OUR NEIGHBOURS, THE DEWENES. LONG HAS HE BEEN HUNGRY FOR KAMARDAN! YOU MUST ACT AT ONCE, ERIK LAD! TAKE A BAND THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS AND ATTACK HIM.
ANOTHER CRAFT WAS CLIMBING HIGH ABOVE THE LANDS OF KAMARDAN.
YE GODS! THAT ROCKET — IT'S ON A COLLISION COURSE!
SKARR FELT THE CONCUSSIVE BLAST OF THE EXPLOSION.
WHUMP!
THE BLAST! IT'S SHIFTED THE INSTRUMENTS! I'M FREE!

STAY COOL, SKARR MY LAD . . . YOU CAN HANDLE THIS — AND WITH LUCK YOU'LL BRING THIS BABY DOWN LIKE A FEATHER, BUT JUST WHERE I DON'T KNOW!
BELOW, THE SAD KAMARDANS MOVED AWAY.
HOLD! LOOK!
IT IS AN OMEN! A STAR FALLS FROM WHERE PREBEN JOINED THE GODS! SEE! AND IT WILL FALL CLOSE . . . IT IS INDEED AN OMEN!

IT SLOWS! IT — IT IS NO STAR! SEE!
IT IS A VEHICLE OF THE GODS. COME! WE MUST TAKE OUT A SHIP . . .
WHAT MYSTERY IS THIS? WHAT WONDERS BEGIN?
SOME TIME LATER —
SOMEONE EMERGES! IS — IS IT A GOD?
HE SHINES LIKE A GOD!
BUT HE LOOKS LIKE A MAN, YOUNG PRINCE. WE MUST TAKE HIM TO THE ELDERS . . .

AND SO, AT THE CASTLE OF PREBEN —
WHO ARE YOU, STRANGER? DO YOU CARRY MESSAGES FROM THE GODS?
I AM NEITHER A GOD NOR A MESSENGER OF THE GODS. MY NAME IS SKARR YEOMAN, AND I AM HERE AS A RESULT OF A SERIES OF — LET'S SAY ACCIDENTS. I AM A SOLDIER.
DO YOU HEAR HIM? HE IS A SOLDIER! HE HAS BEEN SENT TO HELP US FIGHT FORGIR!
I'VE LANDED AMONG THE BARBARIANS. AND SINCE IT'S A LONG WAY HOME I MIGHT AS WELL FIND MYSELF SOME USEFUL WORK . . .
MY FATHER, PREBEN, WAS MURDERED AT FORGIR'S COMMAND. YOU ARE A WARRIOR! YOU APPEAR FROM THE HEAVENS AS MY FATHER GOES TO JOIN THE GODS. THE OMEN CANNOT BE IGNORED. YOU WILL HELP US, SKARR!
IF THAT'S AN ORDER, FORGET IT! IF YOU'RE ASKING ME, THEN I'LL THINK ABOUT IT.

SKARR AGREED TO LEAD THE WAR-PARTY AGAINST FORGIR. BUT, THE YOUNG PRINCE ERIK INSISTED ON GOING ALONG.

LATER —
IS THIS ROUTE WELL KNOWN?
NOW THAT MY FATHER IS DEAD, ONLY BY MYSELF AND TREVESK.

BUT, A LITTLE LATER —
'TIS ONLY A HILL FARMER! I DARESAY HE DISCOVERED THE SHORTCUT AND TRIED IT — TO HIS REGRET!

HILL BANDITS!
ATTACK! MAKE SURE THE PRINCE IS NOT HARMED!
HILL BANDITS MY FOOT! THIS AMBUSH IS FOR YOU, ERIK.
LOOKS LIKE THERE'S A TRAITOR IN YOUR PALACE.
WH-WHAT SHALL I DO, SKARR? THEY — THEY SEEM TO BE EVERYWHERE?

USE YOUR SWORD!
NOW! WE HAVE THE PRINCE. GO! LEAVE THE OTHERS!

MOMENTS LATER —

ALL GOOD, SOLID MUSCLE. WE'LL EARN OURSELVES A NICE LITTLE BONUS WITH THIS LOT.
AND THEY GET TO LIVE A LITTLE LONGER, SO EVERYONE'S HAPPY.
AND WHILE THE PRINCE LIVES, THERE'S STILL A CHANCE TO RESCUE HIM . . .

SOME HOURS LATER —
THE CITY OF VEJLEN, GENTLEMEN. THE LAND OF PROMISE!
SOME PROMISE! BUT I'LL PROMISE YOU A FATE WORSE THAN DEATH.

BUT, AS THEY APPROACHED THE ALMOST COMPLETED ARENA —
NO MORE! I CAN TAKE NO MORE!
STOP THEM!

BUT —
THEY INSULT THE GOD TYR ! THEY PROVOKE HIS ANGER! LET HIM SPEAK!
WHAT THE — ? WHAT IS THAT THING?

A TONGUE OF FIRE LASHED OUT—
TYR SPEAKS! TYR BE PRAISED! TYR IS ALL POWERFUL!
THIS IS INCREDIBLE! THEY LIVE LIKE BARBARIANS — YET THEY HAVE THIS KIND OF TECHNOLOGY.
A LITTLE LATER —
GOOD SOLID MUSCLE ON EACH OF THEM. AND AT THE RATE YOUR GOD TYR IS DEALING WITH THE SLAVES, IT SEEMS WE'RE JUST IN TIME WITH THE REPLACEMENTS, BROTHER!

SOON —
MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR SOULS. YOU SHALL BE TAKEN TO YOUR FATE SOON.
AND IN THE ROYAL CHAMBERS ABOVE, FORGIR WAS REGARDING HIS MOST RECENT ACQUISITION —
I WARN YOU, FORGIR. RELEASE ME BEFORE YOU LIVE TO REGRET THIS ACT.
BRAVE WORDS, LAD! FROM YOUR FATHER THEY MIGHT HAVE GIVEN ME A TREMOR OF ALARM, BUT HE IS DEAD AND THE YAPPING OF A PUP HAS NEVER DONE MORE THAN ANNOY ME.
BUT YOU SHALL BE WELL TREATED AND KEPT IN COMFORT BEFITTING A PRINCE UNTIL A RANSOM HAS BEEN PAID BY YOUR SISTER. CONSIDER YOURSELF LUCKY, BOY! SOMEONE PAID TO HAVE YOU KILLED! BUT THE KILLERS DECIDED TO EARN A LITTLE EXTRA MONEY BY SELLING YOU TO ME.

FORGIR'S EMISSARY ARRIVED AT THE PALACE AT KAMARDAN —

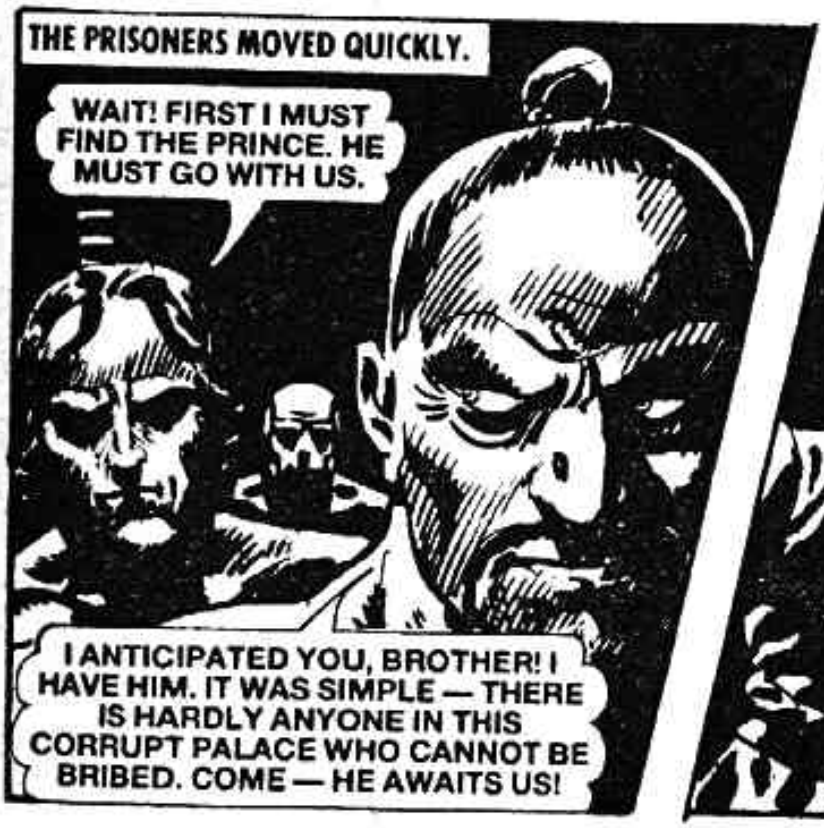
NEVER! THE ONLY ANSWER FORGIR WILL GET IS THIS!
WHEN TREVESK'S 'ANSWER' REACHED FORGIR.
THERE MUST BE MORE GOLD HERE THAN I HAD HOPED FOR! SO FAR, ALL GOES WELL . . .
WHA — ? THEY HAVE SENT ME MY EMISSARY'S HEAD! THEY'LL PAY FOR THIS OUTRAGE! THE PRINCE WILL BE AMONG THE FIRST GREAT SACRIFICES . . .

MEANWHILE, SKARR AND HIS MEN HAD BEEN HARD AT WORK ON THE ARENA WHICH NEARED COMPLETION. AND WHILE HIS MUSCLES WERE STRETCHED ALMOST BEYOND ENDURANCE, HIS TONGUE AND BRAIN HAD NOT BEEN IDLE . . .
DON'T YOU REALISE THAT ONCE THIS WORK IS DONE THEY'LL KILL YOU? YOU'LL BE OF NO MORE USE TO THEM. WE MUST ACT BEFORE THE ARENA IS COMPLETED!
HE SPEAKS SENSE, BROTHER. WE HAVE NO CHOICE —
WAG THAT JAW MUCH LONGER, DOG, AND I'LL BREAK IT! WORK!
EASY, YOU BLACK-HEARTED PIG! HE IS NOT YOUNG!

A LONG HISTORY OF FIGHTING TRADITION WAS IN SKARR'S BLOOD. A DEEP, FRUSTRATED RAGE TOOK POSSESSION OF HIM. ONE INSTINCT SWEPT ALL OTHERS ASIDE — TO FIGHT!

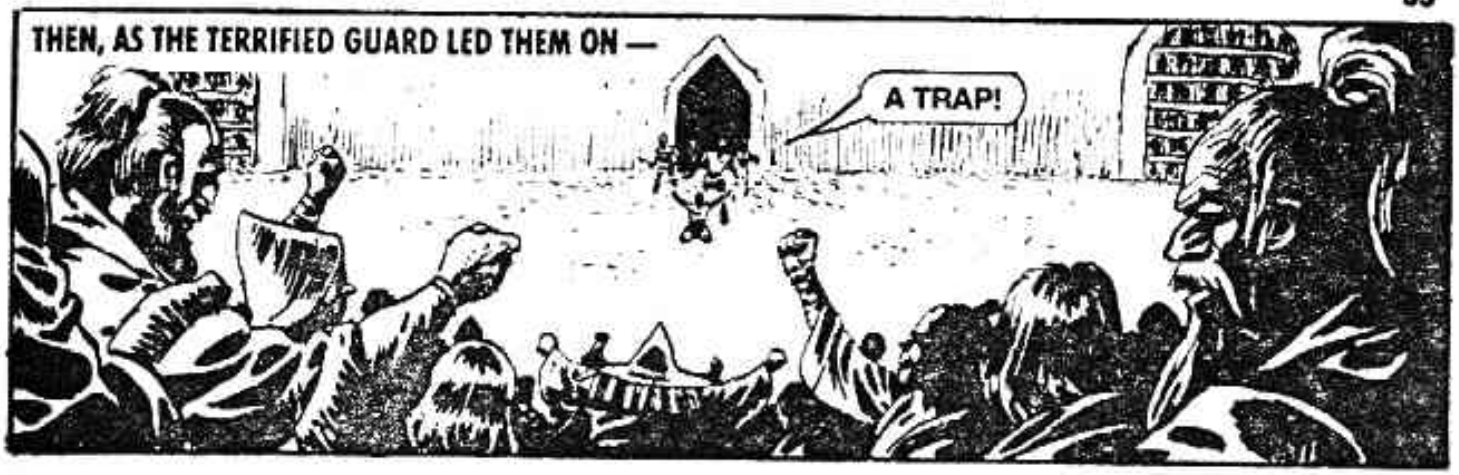
IN THE NAME OF TYR! LOOK AT THAT BRUTE! HE MUST BE DESTROYED!
NO! HE IS JUST WHAT WE NEED FOR THE OPENING CEREMONY . . .
AND SO —
DON'T SHOOT TO KILL! STUN HIM!
SKARR WAS TAKEN AWAY. THE FOLLOWING NIGHT —
LISTEN, BROTHER . . . I SYMPATHISE . . . I'M SICKENED BY ALL THIS CRUELTY AND KILLING. IF I HELP YOU — WILL YOU TAKE ME WITH YOU? IF I'M LEFT BEHIND, THEY'LL FIND OUT AND I'LL DIE — SLOWLY! I MUST HAVE YOUR WORD.
IT SEEMS WE HAVE A DEAL, FRIEND. A KEY TO THESE CHAINS AND A WEAPON WILL CONVINCE ME OF YOUR HONESTY. WORDS ARE NOT ENOUGH . . .

SHORTLY BEFORE DAWN, THE KEY WAS PASSED . . .
FOLLOW ME! I KNOW OF A SECRET WAY OUT THROUGH THE ARENA! COME!


THE PRISONERS MOVED QUICKLY.
WAIT! FIRST I MUST FIND THE PRINCE. HE MUST GO WITH US.
I ANTICIPATED YOU, BROTHER! I HAVE HIM. IT WAS SIMPLE — THERE IS HARDLY ANYONE IN THIS CORRUPT PALACE WHO CANNOT BE BRIBED. COME — HE AWAITS US!

SOON —
PRINCE ERIK! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I AM WELL, SKARR — AND EAGER TO BE CLEAR OF THIS PLACE.

BUT, IN THE SPECIAL INNER-SANCTUM DEVOTED TO THE GREAT GOD TYR —
IT GOES WELL! THE ARENA IS COMPLETE — WE NEED NEITHER SLAVES NOR SLAVE-DRIVERS SO IT SOLVES THE PROBLEM OF THEIR DISPOSAL TO HAVE THAT BRUTE AND HIS FRIENDS SLAUGHTER THE OVERSEERS AND GUARDS BEFORE BEING SLAUGHTERED THEMSELVES . . . THAT GUARD DID WELL CONVINCING HIM.
BELOW, IN THE TUNNELS —
THROUGH HERE — THEN ACROSS THE ARENA. THE REST WILL BE SIMPLE. THEY'LL BE SEARCHING THE MAIN PALACE CORRIDORS FOR YOU. THEY'LL NOT EXPECT YOU TO ESCAPE THIS WAY.
THEN LEAD ON, BROTHER. AS YOU REQUESTED — WE TAKE YOU WITH US!
I-I SHALL COVER YOUR REAR. MAKE SURE THAT —
OH, NO, 'FRIEND'! IT HAS BEEN JUST A LITTLE TOO EASY!


THEN, AS THE TERRIFIED GUARD LED THEM ON —
A TRAP!

DOORS ROLLED OPEN AND TERRIFYING BEASTS LURCHED OUT.
CRAH!
FIGHT!

BUT SOME SLAVES WERE NOT VERSED IN THE ART OF FIGHTING —

FORGIR WATCHED IN GLEE —
HA-HA! THIS DOES MY HEART GOOD.

WE — WE'RE WINNING, SKARR!
WAIT — SOMETHING ELSE IS COMING OUT.

IT WAS A SIGHT TO FREEZE THE BLOOD!
THERE'S NO HOPE — NOT FOR ANY OF US! LOOK AT IT!
THE CENTRE HEAD . . . IT DOESN'T SEEM TO DO ANY OF THE KILLING . . .

THAT CENTRE HEAD — IT'S THE BRAIN — THE NERVE-CENTRE. IT REARED AND SHRIEKED AT THAT THRUST!

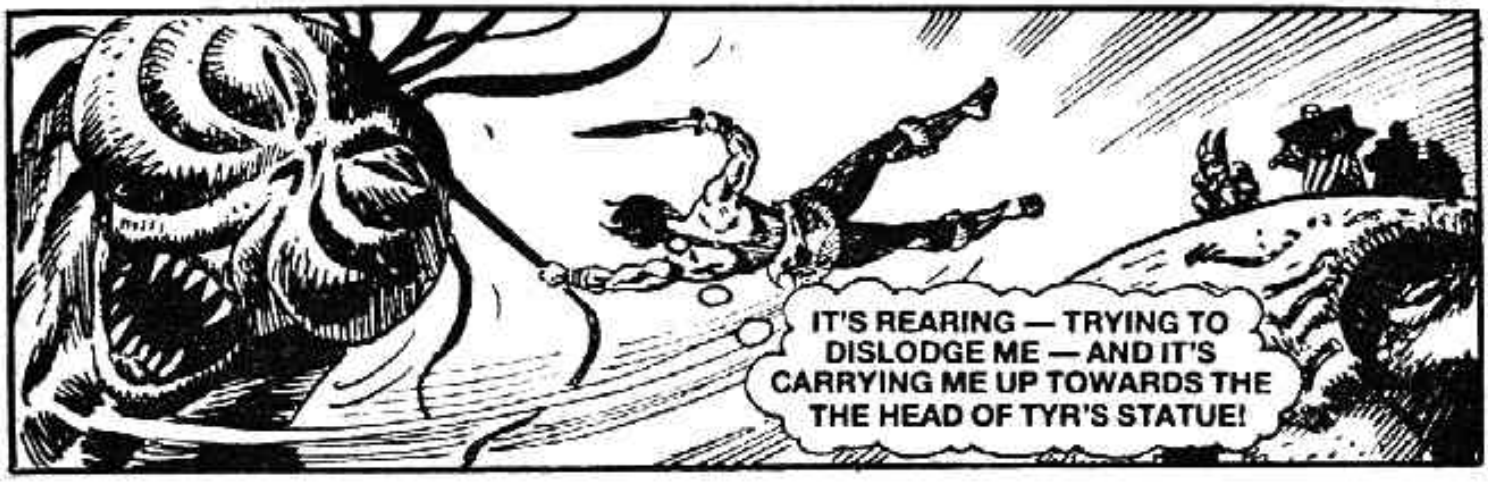
AS THE EARLY SUN BEGAN TO STREAM INTO THE HUGE ARENA—
IT'S GOT THE PRINCE!

THE SUN! THIS MIGHT WORK!

CRAH!
I BLINDED IT FOR THE MOMENT! NOW — WHEN IT SWOOPS FOR HIM AGAIN—

AS THE GREAT HEAD CAME DOWN TO RETAKE THE PRINCE—
NOW! I JUST PRAY THIS WORKS—

IF I'M RIGHT — IT'LL BE THE CENTRE HEAD THAT RESPONDS — AND THAT'S THE ONE I'M AFTER . . .
AS THE CENTRE HEAD SWUNG TOWARDS HIM—


IT'S REARING — TRYING TO DISLODGE ME — AND IT'S CARRYING ME UP TOWARDS THE THE HEAD OF TYR'S STATUE!

NOW, YOU SERVANTS OF EVIL . . . TASTE MY STEEL!
STOP HIM! HE MUSTN'T REACH THE BREATH OF FIRE!

THE BLASPHEMOUS CUR! HE DESECRATES TYR'S STATUE! CAN NO ONE STOP HIM?
BUT IT WAS TOO LATE!
THIS IS WHERE TYR AND I SPEAK AS ONE!
I'LL DO AS MUCH DAMAGE WITH THIS THING AS I CAN UNTIL SOMEONE AT A CONTROL-PANEL SWITCHES IT OFF!

DO SOMETHING! CAN NO ONE STOP HIM?
THE CONTROLS! THE MAIN SWITCH — QUICKLY!
BUT SKARR HAD GIVEN THE SLAVES THE EDGE.
WE STILL MIGHT DO IT. THAT YOUNG PRINCE IS GROWING UP FAST! I'D BETTER LEND A HAND DOWN THERE!
I'VE SET THE BALL ROLLING! TIME TO GRAB YOUNG ERIK AND GET HIM AWAY FROM HERE . . .

IT'S TIME WE WERE GOING. THE REST OF 'EM CAN HANDLE THINGS HERE. WE'VE DONE ENOUGH.
PITY! I WAS JUST BEGINNING TO ENJOY MYSELF!

STOP THEM! LOOK, FOOLS! THEY ESCAPE!

MOMENTS LATER—
FORGIR! KEEP GOING, LAD!

SKARR USED A WHIP TO DELAY PURSUIT—
I'VE BEEN WORKING TO HAUL THOSE STONES DOWN TO THAT ARENA . . . NOW I'LL LET THEM MAKE THEIR OWN WAY DOWN!

THE CENTRE PROP WAS SNAPPED OUT OF PLACE, AND—
WHA —? OH, NO! NOOO!
AAIIIEEEEEE!

JUST THE GATES, LAD! KEEP GOING — FAST! AND KEEP LOW!

BUT—
OH, NOOO! NOT NOW!
THWAK!

THE DRAWBRIDGE! RAISE IT!

IF THEY GET THAT UP BEFORE I'M ACROSS, WE'RE DONE FOR!

SKARR QUICKLY MOUNTED THE HORSE—
COME ON, MY BEAUTY — YOU MUST DO IT . . . JUST ONE GOOD CLEAR LEAP AND WE'RE FREE . . .

YAAH!

NICE GOING! BUT LET'S NOT HANG AROUND . . . WE'VE A WAY TO GO YET, AND I NEED TO BUY TIME TO TAKE A LOOK AT THE LAD!

SOMETIME LATER—
GET ME BACK, SKARR! ALIVE OR DEAD — GET ME BACK . . .
I'LL GET YOU BACK, LAD — THAT'S A PROMISE! THERE'S A RECKONING TO BE HAD AT KAMARDAN.

YOUR SISTER IS AS YOUNG AND AS INNOCENT AS YOU, AND HER LIFE HANGS IN THE BALANCE — IF MY GUESS IS RIGHT!

AT THE PALACE OF KAMARDAN—
IT IS MANY DAYS SINCE WE HAVE HAD NEWS OF PRINCE ERIK. I THINK WE MUST RESIGN OURSELVES TO YOUR BROTHER'S DEATH, MY CHILD, THE EVIL FORGIR MUST SURELY HAVE KILLED HIM!
FIRST MY FATHER — AND NOW —

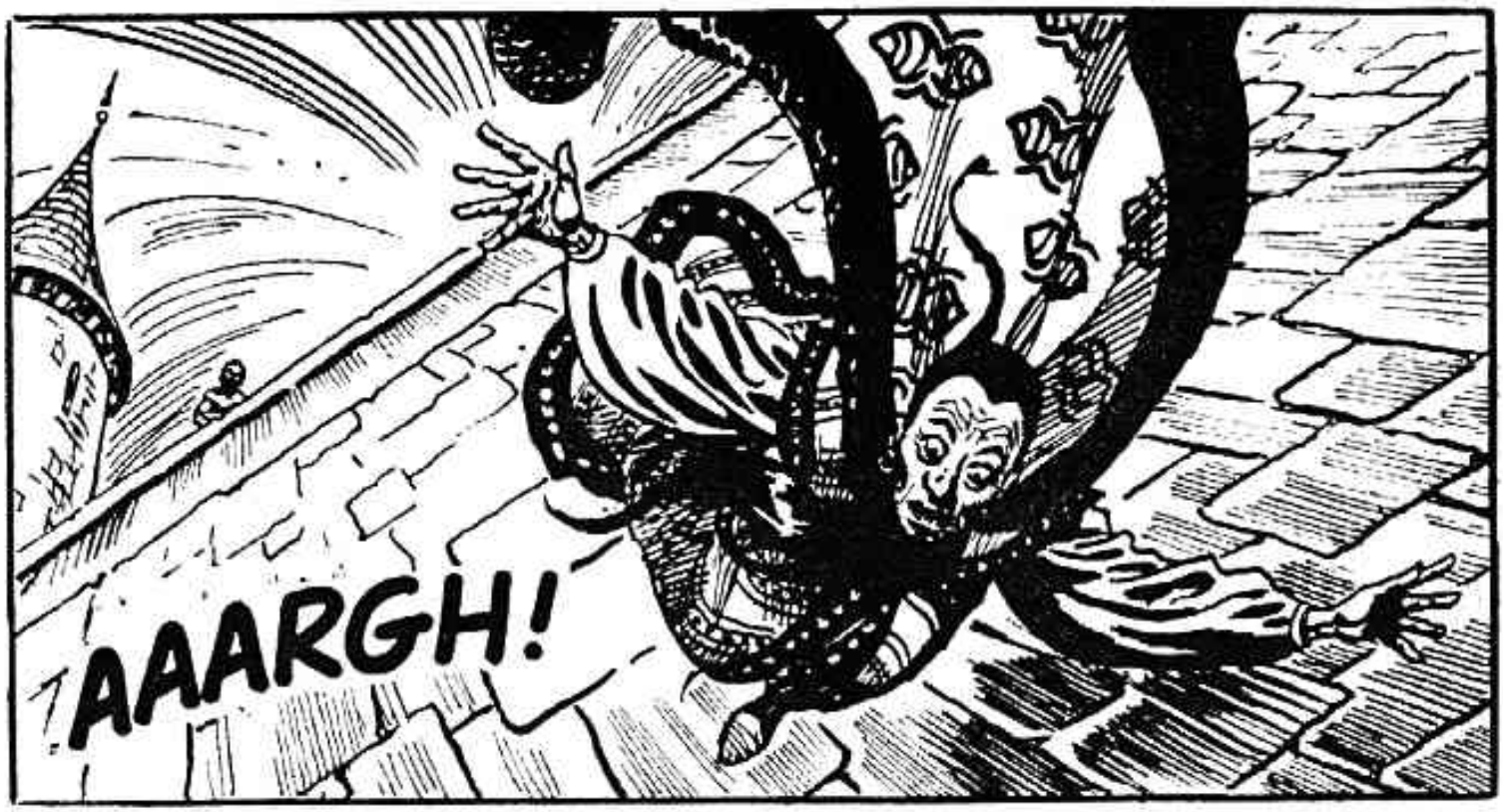
BUT IF HE IS DEAD, WHAT SHALL I DO! I KNOW NOTHING OF HOW TO RULE A KINGDOM! NEVER BEFORE HAS KAMARDAN HAD A QUEEN!
DON'T WORRY YOUR YOUNG HEAD. I SHALL GUIDE YOU. JUST DO ALL THAT I TELL YOU TO DO AND KAMARDAN SHALL BE RULED AS IT SHOULD BE . . .
AS YOU THINK IT SHOULD BE RULED, TREVESK! BUT YOU'LL NOT GET THE CHANCE TO TURN THAT YOUNG GIRL INTO A PUPPET! YOU'VE TOO MUCH BLOOD ON YOUR HANDS TO BE ALLOWED TO LIVE!
WHAT THE —?
ERIK! NO!

TREVESK ACTED WITH THE STUNNING SPEED OF A SNAKE.

AGREE TO KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT AND SHE CAN LIVE . . . WE'LL RULE TOGETHER, YOU AND I. I'LL KEEP HER SHUT UP IN ONE OF THE TOWERS. THINK, MAN!
IF YOU WERE GOING TO KILL HER AND BLAME ME YOU'D HAVE DONE IT BY NOW AND CALLED THE GUARDS . . .

SUDDENLY—
MURDERING, CUR!
KICK!
DOWN, GIRL! DROP!

WHA —?
EEEAAAARGH!


AAARGH!

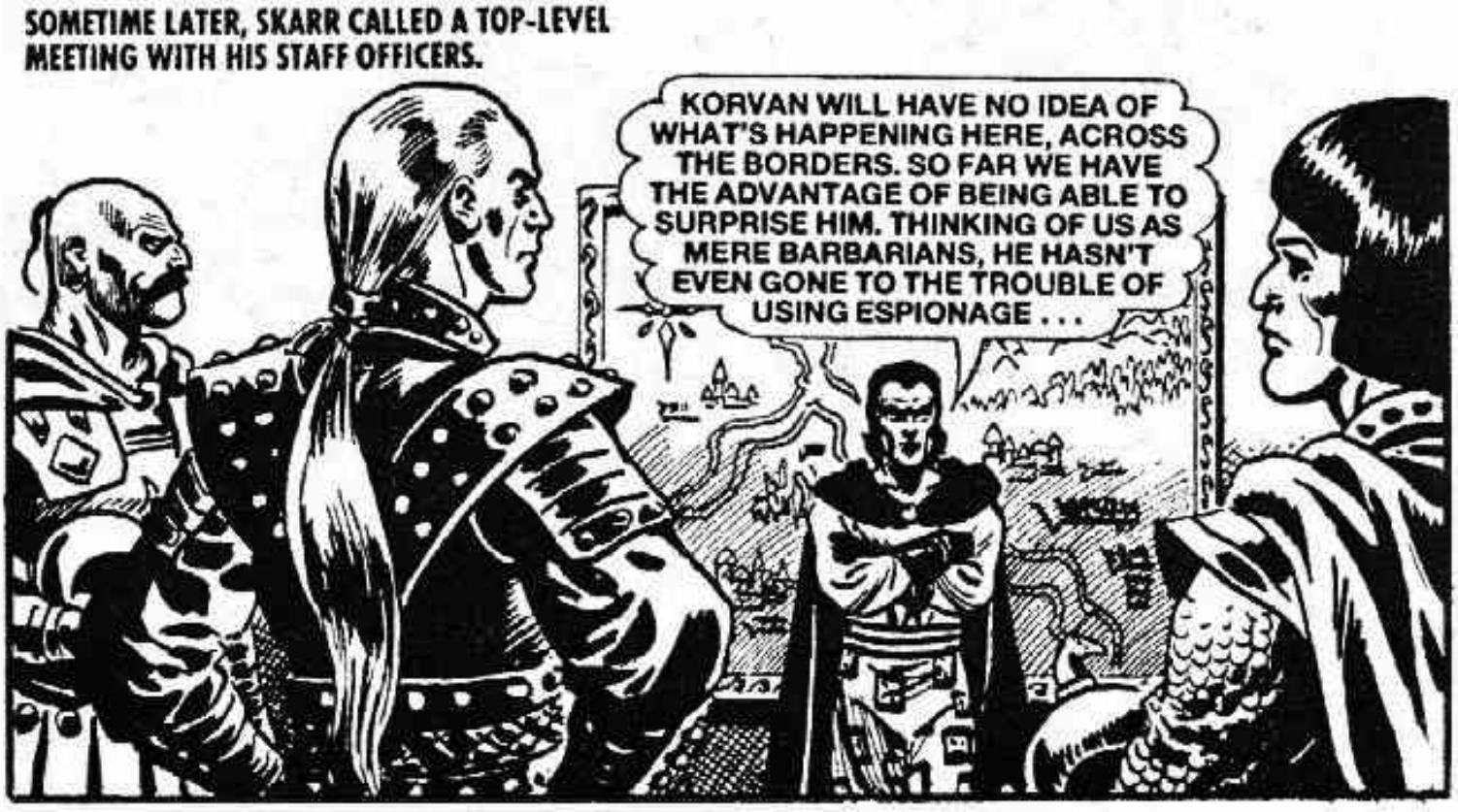
IT'S ALL OVER! ALL DEBTS HAVE BEEN PAID. TIME TO START AFRESH. YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GROW UP IN A HURRY — JUST AS YOUR BROTHER DID.
I — I OWE YOU MUCH, SKARR. BUT . . . I SHALL NEED HELP TO RULE THIS COUNTRY, AND — AND I SHALL NOT BE ABLE TO TRUST ANYONE FOR SOME TIME . . .

THAT EVENING, THE NEW QUEEN CALLED A MEETING OF ELDERS.
MY FATHER AND MY BROTHER DIED AS A RESULT OF TREVESK'S TREACHERY. I,TOO,SHOULD HAVE DIED BUT FOR THIS MAN. I AM APPOINTING HIM MY CHIEF ADVISER UNTIL SUCH TIME AS I FEEL ABLE TO RULE ALONE.
SO BE IT, YOUR MAJESTY. THERE WILL BE NO VOICE AGAINST HIM IN THIS COURT.
AFTER THE CEREMONY OF ERIK'S LAST RITES, I SHALL BE RESTRUCTURING THE ARMY. NO LONGER WILL YOUR RELIGION COMMAND TOTAL USE OF SUCH SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES . . .
BUT — NO! YOU CANNOT —
I CAN! AND I SHALL! IN THE NORTH, ANOTHER SUCH AS TREVESK IS ALREADY PLANNING TO CONQUER THE WHOLE OF THE SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE. HIS NAME IS KORVAN. WE NEED TO SET UP AN INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT — SEND OUT SPIES TO DISCOVER HIS INTENTIONS. WE MAY ALREADY BE TOO LATE, BUT WE MUST ACT NOW . . .

AND, EVEN AS SKARR SET THE WHEELS IN MOTION, KORVAN WAS FINDING HIS FEET IN HIS NEW ROLE AS DICTATOR OF THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE . . .
THE TIME IS RIPE, SOLVERT! WE MUST TAKE THE SOUTH . . . A BRILLIANT, SWEEPING CONQUEST WILL ESTABLISH ME AS THE GREATEST DICTATOR OF HISTORY . . .
HOW WILL YOU GO ABOUT IT, KORVAN? WE CAN'T AFFORD A LONG, DRAWN-OUT STRUGGLE.
THEY ARE BARBARIANS, LED BY BARBARIANS! THAT IS NOT THE PROBLEM. OUR PROBLEM WILL BE JUSTIFYING THE FIRST ATTACK. FIRST WE SHALL INVENT A RAID BY THEM ACROSS THE BORDERS. WE SHALL RETALIATE. ESCALATION WILL RESULT AND WE SHALL INVADE AS A KIND OF "POLICE" ACTION . . .

MEANWHILE, IN KAMARDAN, SKARR'S ARMY WAS BEING TRAINED.
THIS LASER GUN MAKES MY SWORD AND BOW LOOK LIKE THE WEAPONS OF A CHILD . . .
DO NOT DISMISS THEM! THEY HAVE TRAINED YOUR EYE AND ARM. TRANSFER THOSE DEVELOPED INSTINCTS TO THIS . . .

UNDER SKARR'S DIRECTION, TECHNICIANS HITHERTO DEVOTED TO THE PRODUCTION OF "HOLY" SPACE-CRAFT USED ONLY FOR FUNERAL RITES, WERE SOON PRODUCING FIGHTING CRAFT . . .
DESIGNED TO YOUR OUTLINES, SKARR — WITH A FEW MODIFICATIONS OF OUR OWN.
EXCELLENT! WITH LUCK WE WON'T NEED ANYTHING MUCH MORE ELABORATE. WE DON'T HAVE THE TIME ANYWAY. WE HAVE TO WIN WITH WHAT WE HAVE . . .

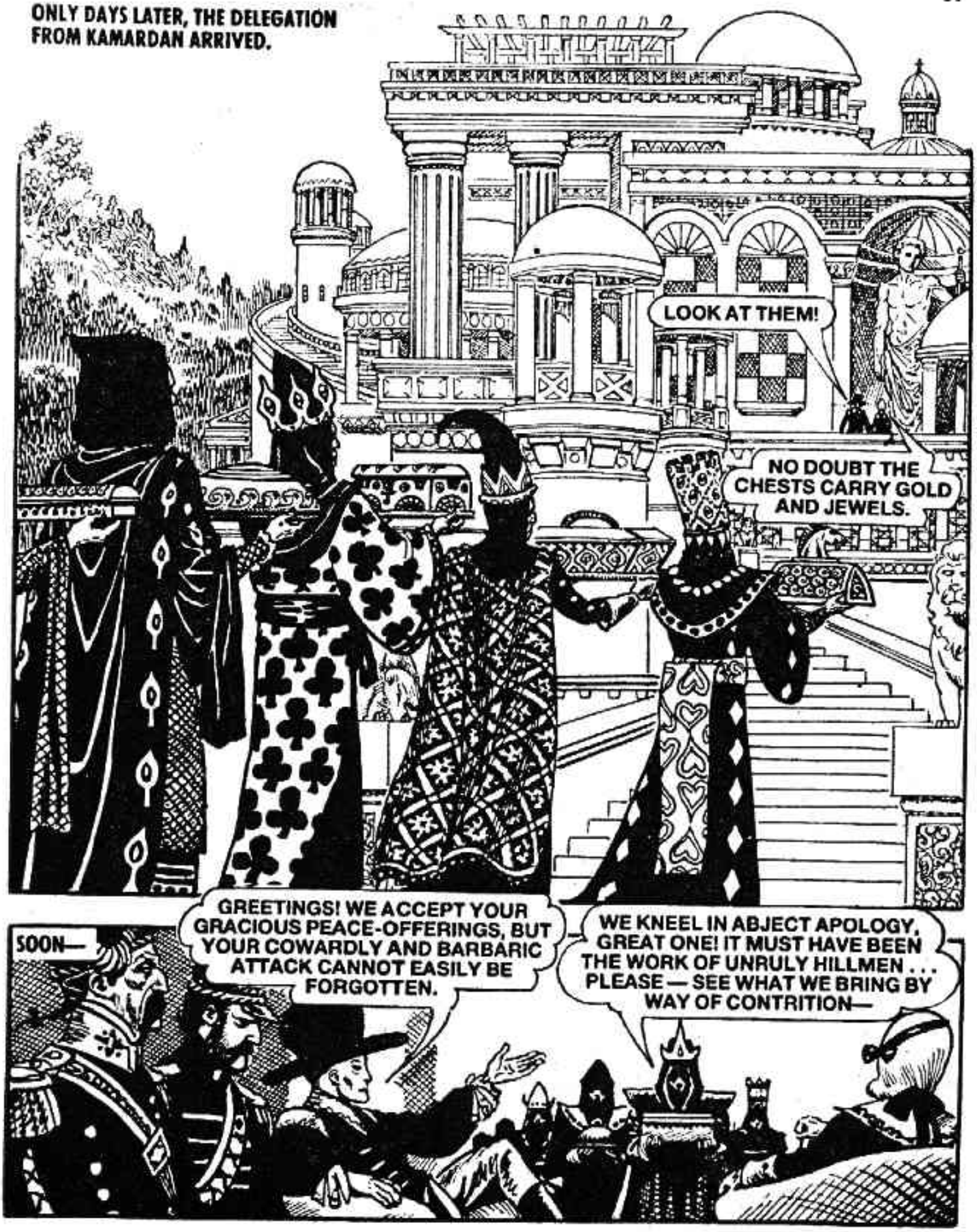

SOMETIME LATER, SKARR CALLED A TOP-LEVEL MEETING WITH HIS STAFF OFFICERS.
KORVAN WILL HAVE NO IDEA OF WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE, ACROSS THE BORDERS. SO FAR WE HAVE THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING ABLE TO SURPRISE HIM. THINKING OF US AS MERE BARBARIANS, HE HASN'T EVEN GONE TO THE TROUBLE OF USING ESPIONAGE . . .

ONLY WEEKS LATER, KORVAN LAUNCHED THE FIRST ATTACK — DISGUISED AS KAMARDANS—

KORVAN WATCHED THE NEWS BROADCASTS WITH GRIM SATISFACTION.
SO! PHASE ONE. NOW WE MAY MOVE ACROSS WITH RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION, OUR HEADS HELD HIGH . . .
THE FOLLOWING DAY, KORVAN'S TROOPS CROSSED INTO KAMARDAN.
IT'LL BE EASY! IT SEEMS THEY STILL USE BOWS AND ARROWS IN THIS COUNTRY! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!

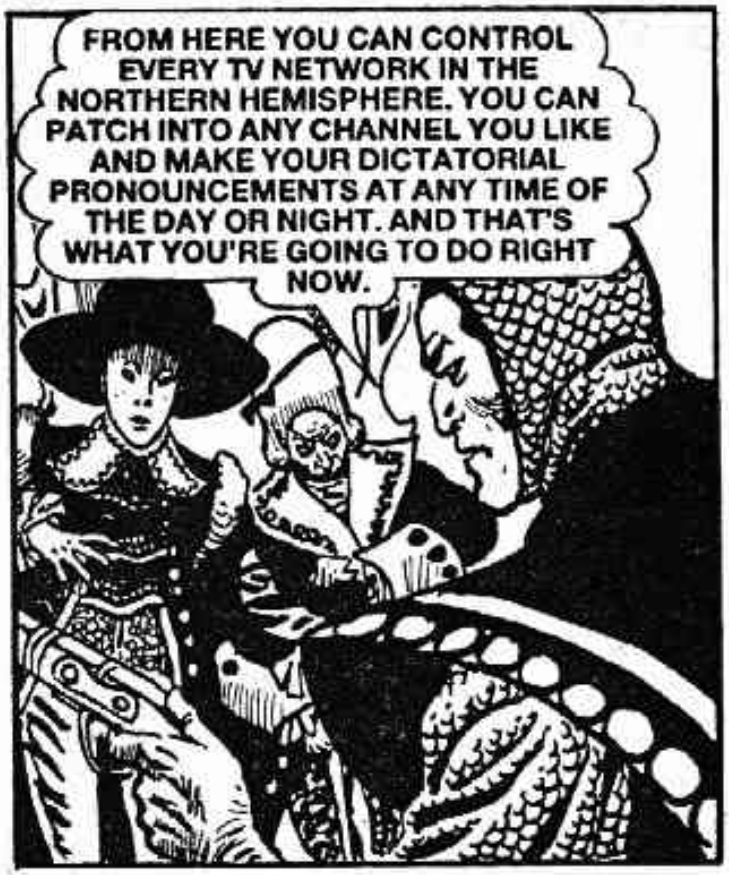
YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS, SKARR?
DEADLY SERIOUS! JUST LEAD ME TO THEIR COMMUNICATIONS VEHICLE. KORVAN WILL BE EXPECTING A REPORT FROM THE COMMANDER . . .
THIS IS THE CHIEF OPERATOR. SHALL I FORCE THE CODES OUT OF HIM. IT WON'T TAKE LONG, SKARR.
SKARR YEOMAN! IT— IT ISN'T POSSIBLE . . .
I KNOW THE CODES. NOW LET'S TELL KORVAN JUST WHAT HE'S EXPECTING TO HEAR . . .
SOMETIME LATER AT KORVAN'S WAR ROOM—
BETTER THAN I HAD HOPED! THE KAMARDANS ARE BUG-EYED WITH TERROR. IN TRUE BARBARIAN FASHION THEY WISH TO SEND A DELEGATION TO ME PERSONALLY WITH "PEACE OFFERINGS". IT SEEMS THE NEW YOUNG QUEEN IS NOT EAGER FOR WAR!
GOOD, KORVAN! WE ACCEPT THE DELEGATION, THE "PEACE OFFERINGS", AND THEN SEND OUR OWN "PEACE-KEEPING" FORCE TO THEIR CAPITAL! EXCELLENT.

BUT SKARR AND HIS TROOPS WERE WAITING. SUDDENLY—


ONLY DAYS LATER, THE DELEGATION FROM KAMARDAN ARRIVED.
LOOK AT THEM!
NO DOUBT THE CHESTS CARRY GOLD AND JEWELS.
SOON—
GREETINGS! WE ACCEPT YOUR GRACIOUS PEACE-OFFERINGS, BUT YOUR COWARDLY AND BARBARIC ATTACK CANNOT EASILY BE FORGOTTEN.
WE KNEEL IN ABJECT APOLOGY, GREAT ONE! IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE WORK OF UNRULY HILLMEN . . . PLEASE — SEE WHAT WE BRING BY WAY OF CONTRITION—

THE CHESTS WERE OPENED. THEN—
IN THE NAME OF—
WEAPONS! GUARDS!
LIKE OUR "PEACE OFFERINGS", KORVAN?
SKARR! SKARR YEOMAN! BUT—YOU—
. . . SHOULD BE DEAD! NO, KORVAN. I'M NOT! NOT BY A LONG LONG WAY!

D — DON'T BE A FOOL, SKARR. OUT THERE — MEN AND WEAPONS YOU CAN'T MATCH.
IT WON'T LAST TEN MORE MINUTES, KORVAN. I'VE GOT MISSILE CARRYING FIGHTERS MOVING IN. THEY CROSSED YOUR BORDERS HOURS AGO AND THEY'RE FLYING BELOW THE DETECTION NET. YOU FORGET THAT I KNOW FIRST HAND ABOUT THE DEFENCE SET-UP.
AND, WITHIN TEN MINUTES—
SO MUCH FOR YOUR "DEFENCES" KORVAN!
BRILLIANT, SKARR . . . I HAVE TO ADMIT IT. EXCELLENT WORK. BUT YOU ALWAYS WERE FIRST-CLASS! LISTEN, MAN. JUST THINK! BETWEEN US WE COULD RULE THIS ENTIRE PLANET! YOUR SKILLS — MY BRAINS. . . WE COULD—
IT'S A SONG I'VE HEARD BEFORE, KORVAN — AND I DON'T LIKE THE TUNE.


FROM HERE YOU CAN CONTROL EVERY TV NETWORK IN THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE. YOU CAN PATCH INTO ANY CHANNEL YOU LIKE AND MAKE YOUR DICTATORIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS AT ANY TIME OF THE DAY OR NIGHT. AND THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO RIGHT NOW.

YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE A PUBLIC CONFESSION OF EVERY CRIME YOU'VE COMMITTED — INCLUDING THE ATTEMPT ON MY LIFE. YOU'RE GOING TO ADMIT THE LIES ABOUT KAMARDAN AND THAT PHONEY RAID ACROSS THE BORDER . . .
NO . . .

YES . . . START BROADCASTING — OR DIE ! DON'T MIND TAKING OVER!

THEN — THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT?
YOU'RE GOING TO ANNOUNCE A DEMOCRATIC ELECTION. THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN HEMISPHERE ARE GOING TO ELECT THE KIND OF LEADER AND GOVERNMENT THEY WANT.

SKARR HAULED KORVAN TO HIS FEET—
ONCE I'VE SEEN EVEYRTHING SLIP INTO SOME KIND OF FREE AND DEMOCRATIC GEAR, I'LL SEE YOU GO ON PUBLIC TRIAL, KORVAN.

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Skarr was a popular hero in the army of the Norlands — too popular to live, said the rulers. Sent on a suicide mission, he somehow survived, to become the bitterest enemy of the evil rulers of Norland.

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